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Senate of Pennsylvania

May 15, 2008

Ms. Victoria J. Rutson, Chief
Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: R.J. Corman Railroad Company/Pennsylvania Lines
Rush Township Industrial Track Construction Project

Dear Ms. Rutson:

I am writing to express my thoughts regarding the proposed reactivation of some 20 miles of former Conrail lines generally east of Wallacetown, Pennsylvania. While I consider any filing on behalf of this proposed reactivation premature at this time, considering that several federal and state agencies have yet to advance any portion of this landfill/industrial development project toward a final disposition, allow me to speak to the environmental and social economic issues that this reactivation would raise.

While I am not exact as to the previous rail history on this abandoned section of Conrail properties, I do know that the communities that it traverses have changed dramatically since the days of this corridor's development and the subsequent end of the coal mining era which it last served. I am very concerned that the environmental standards of today, which were of no regard in the era when this line was originally built, **require the most complete, non-partial review that can be afforded by federal law.** This line will be running through a very rural, sparsely populated and pristine geographical setting.

While earlier populations were focused as a support to the coal or lumber industries, today's communities rely heavily on the recreation/tourism economy. Homes along this corridor haven't seen train traffic in many years and oftentimes, many newer homes or recreational dwellings have developed that are in very close proximity of the old line. Obviously, this will cause a good deal of concern from those who have made such investments.

Additionally, I must make note that the firm that has been retained to do the environmental review work for this project, Skelly & Loy, Inc., while a very reputable firm, is the same firm providing these services for the landfill/industrial developer, Resource Recovery, Inc. and this fact raises many concerns for my constituents who are opposed to this development. They do not see this partnership as an "independent" environmental review and are not trustworthy of the outcome. I trust that your oversight will ensure that an extensive and complete environmental review will be guaranteed.

Ms. Victoria J. Rutson

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I must also add that this reactivation will disrupt the very successful development and operation of the Snow Shoe Rails to Trails Association, which now operates on lands owned by the Headwaters Charitable Trust, that encompass approximately one-half of the requested reactivation route. There needs to be a safeguarding of the state and private investments made into these facilities, in particular there needs to be a guaranteed replacement of the lost trail system and its associated connections and a reimbursement of the dollars invested to maintain the rail corridors existing infrastructure.

Thank you for your kind review of my comments in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jake", written over the word "Senator".

Senator Jake Corman

JDC/jre